

State of California  
Department of Water Resources  
State Water Resources Control Board  
Department of Health Services

2002 RECYCLED WATER TASK FORCE  
MINUTES OF  
10 OCTOBER 2002 PUBLIC DISCUSSION SESSION

DRAFT

**Meeting Time and Location**

7: 00 am-8: 20 am, 10 October 2002, California Water Policy Conference, Wilshire Grand Hotel & Centre, 930 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California.

**Attendance**

Forty-five people attended the public discussion session, including 9 Task Force members, 3 state support staff, and 33 members of the public. See attachment for a complete list.

**Summary of Proceedings**

The Task Force chair Richard Katz gave opening remarks. The Recycled Water Task Force report to the legislature is not due until July 2003. However, the Task Force has a goal to have the report in place for consideration by the legislature in January 2003. Mr. Katz explained the reason that they are presenting at this conference is to receive input as part of the public outreach. All the work regarding recycled water hinges on public acceptance of recycled water. Therefore, the Task Force needs to determine what can to be done to raise the comfort level of the public in order to take advantage of this water source.

Next, the lead staff person to the Task Force, Fawzi Karajeh, described the purpose of the Task Force, the schedule, and activities to date.

The co-chair of the Public Information, Education, and Outreach Workgroup to the 2002 Recycled Water Task Force, Herman Collins, spoke next. He described his introduction to recycled water and described the charge of this workgroup. He emphasized the need to work with the challenges presented by the opposition. By understanding the opposition's issues, we can arrive at common goals to further the use of recycled water. Mr. Collins said that although he was a leader of an opposition group in the past, he could be a strong advocate for utilization of recycled water and recycled water projects for certain activities and uses. He stressed the importance of the public's voice in the issues surrounding recycled water. If the public does not take part in the decision, we cannot ask them to take part in the solution. Mr. Collins stated that education is a must and is a factor in turning his view around to accept some forms of recycled water usage.

Katz commented that government and elected officials often try to gain only their proponent's support because they do not want to waste their time or insight with their presumed opposition who may not support them. He believes that opponents should not be ignored, for they may be a

future supporter. For example, Herman Collins now views recycled water projects differently because he has been involved in the process.

The following is a summary of remarks by various participants in the discussion session:

1. In order to develop leadership, the medium and high-income areas should receive the recycled water first. The whole notion that in San Diego 70% of the repurified water would be delivered to low-income households sends the message that this is what is going to happen in the future. The low-income communities have a lot of infrastructure in disrepair. The water quality rules that should protect them are not enforced in their communities.

Herman Collins answered this remark to correct the misperception that he and others held about the San Diego Repurification Project. He stated that he and the environmental justice community in San Diego were steered by a politician to believe that 70% of the water would be delivered to the low- and moderate-income communities. Since that time, he has learned otherwise.

Mr. Collins states that the mixture of treated and untreated water in San Vicente Reservoir would have been delivered to 80% of the urban communities including Point Loma, Scripps Ranch, San Carlos, and other neighborhoods down the pipeline from the reservoir. Lake Skinner's treated water would have been used in the northern part of San Diego County. The bottom line is that the water was not being delivered only to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. The existing infrastructure determined where the water would flow, and it included all income types. Mr. Collins suggests that, when we hear that certain communities are being affected more than others, we take a deeper look at the facts.

Richard Katz chimed in that in addition to the environmental justice inequity perceptions, a similar issue arises when people question: 'Why in my backyard and not someone else's?' as occurred in the San Fernando Valley with the recycled water recharging the aquifer. The water in those aquifers actually serves the communities of Hollywood, Los Angeles and others, not the San Fernando Valley. Therefore, it is important to check out the facts.

2. The environmental community is concerned about this "additional" water. Will this water be used for more growth? To what extent will this additional water benefit the environment and the aquatic life?

Mr. Collins answered this comment by saying that California is growing regardless of the constriction of our freeways, the scarcity of our water, or the pollution in our environment. Any discussion of new water will naturally include a discussion of growth. We need to look at this not just as a growth issue but an environmental issue as well. We need to make this water a renewable resource while maintaining our economy and our environment. Pulling the plug on the water will not prevent growth.

Richard Katz interjected, in terms of new water/old water, the state needs to make up 800,000 acre-feet of water that Californians are currently using from the Colorado

River somehow. The state has permission to use only 4.4 million acre-feet of Colorado River water but we are currently using 5.3 million acre-feet.

3. On the growth issue and the Task Force report, it is important that as the Taskforce prepares recommendations to the legislature, the language be explicit. When the recycled water is being used to replace water already in use, and the replacement is specified, it is a way of tracking the water use. For example, in the Mono Lake case, the state and federal legislation contained language identifying recycled water as replacement water for Mono Lake. This money ? for recycled water is applied to conservation. This information is a way of addressing concerns about using the recycled water for growth and provides reassurance to the public.

Richard Katz concurred and added that by specifying what use the recycled water will replace in the legislation, helped get the project implemented and agreed to by the end of the day.

Herman Collins said that it is important that the end user, consumer, understand the benefits of recycle water usage. This could be in the form of a simple note to the consumer that says that conservation will benefit, or a mailing to the consumers which describes the benefits that are being derived in their local community as a result of recycled water usage. We need to show the people for what benefits the recycled water is exchanged.

4. We should highlight how recycled water benefits the environment, for instance, stream bed augmentation. In times of critical dry periods, recycled water is a reliable source of water.
5. Another person mentioned the need to change the headline of “toilet to tap” to “showers to flowers”. However, the process of educating the public will take a long time. One method of informing the public would be to include information on how recycled water use can economically benefit a resident of a community. For instance a chart could be made which correlates number of household members versus indoor water usage, outdoor water usage and cost savings using recycled water for irrigation only.
6. We need to stop using the term “toilet to tap”. The more that we use it the more the idea is reinforced. The term needs to go away.

Jonas Minton responded by stating that instead of avoiding the term, that we examine the issues and concerns that underlie it. We need to go several layers deep to be personally assured that direct potable reuse is a good idea, and then to assure others.

Herman Collins commented that although only one- to two- percent of our drinking water supply is actually being used for drinking, he questions that premise. He believes that 95 percent of us drink bottled water. Unless we can overcome those issues of toilet to tap, we are not going to get the public to buy into the process.

Mr. Collins believes that public agencies need to commit and take a leadership role with recycled water. He has yet to walk into a public agency building in San Diego

where toilets are being flushed with toilet water, or been in a San Diego park which states it is being irrigated with recycled water. Public agencies are asking private industry and private individuals to respond in a far greater capacity than they are willing to for themselves.

7. One participant commented on the huge cost to the consumer where all the water is treated to drinking water standards, yet only one to two percent is actually ingested. This area should be looked into economically, recycled water use aside, by examining ways to make better use of the drinking water.
8. The benefit of recycled water in terms of reliability. Certain business users have switched to recycled water because of its reliability. Perhaps that is one of the messages that we can make to the community is job security. For instance, Topan makes computer chips using recycled water because it is reliable. Also, parks and golf courses can remain green during water shortages and that is a real benefit to the community.
9. The infrastructure needs to be in place before you can encourage use. There may be acceptance of recycled water use, but the cost of building the infrastructure is significant. It is difficult to get politicians to agree to implement something that may raise consumers' rates.
10. One participant commented that the current signage for recycled water does send mixed messages. We need to send the right message. He recommends that DHS and industry to get together and set a standard what signage we want to present to the public as we develop our understanding of public perception of recycled water.

Richard Katz agreed and mentioned that lawyers, scientists and those involved with public policy should also participate in this process.

2002 RECYCLED WATER TASK FORCE  
ATTENDEES AT 10 OCTOBER 2002 PUBLIC DISCUSSION SESSION

Merle Aleshire	Valley Center Municipal Water District
Tim Anderson	Sonoma County Water Agency
Suzanne Arena	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Lynn Barris	
Kirk Bone	Serrano Associates LLC
Lena Brook	California Clean Water Action
Rosalie Cartwright	LWV
Carl W. Chen	Systech Engineering
Joan Clayburgh	Sierra Nevada Alliance
Janet Clements	Trinity County
Herman C. Collins	Collins Strategic Group, Inc.
Dean Efstathiou	LA DPW
Ilan Funke-Bilu	Cambria Community Services District
Mark Horne	EIP Associates
Bill Jacoby	San Diego County Water Authority
Rosemary Kamei	Santa Clara Valley Water District
Fawzi Karajeh	Department of Water Resources
Richard Katz	California State Water Resources Control Board
Nancy King	Department of Water Resources
Jessica Leibler	California Clean Water Action
Richard Mendes	City of San Diego
Darryl G. Miller	West and Central Basin Municipal Water District
Richard Mills	State Water Resources Control Board
Jonas Minton	Department of Water Resources
David Nesmith	Environmental Water Caucus
Mark Norton	SAWPA
Duncan Nyabilo	California State University of San Bernardino
Dennis O'Connor	California Research Bureau
K. Pourkazemi	City of Los Angeles
David Richardson	East Bay Municipal Utilities District
Lynn Sadler	MCP
Jawahar Shah	City of Los Angeles Sanitation
Tracy Slavin	Bureau of Reclamation
Tracey Slavin	Bureau of Reclamation
Frances Spivy-Weber	Mono Lake Committee
Kip Spragens	East Bay Municipal Utilities District
Tom Stokely	Trinity County Planning
William T. VanWagoner	East Valley Water Recycling Project
Michael Warburton	Public Trust Alliance
Robert Wilkinson	UCSB
Otis Wollan	Placer County Water Agency
Patrick Wright	CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Bill Wright	MWD
Adeline M. L. Yoong	Water Replenishment District of Southern California
Marguerite Young	California Clean Water Action

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## **2002 RECYCLED WATER TASK FORCE**

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION SESSION**  
**in conjunction with the**  
**California Water Policy Conference**  
**(AKA the Power Conference)**  
**October 10, 2002 at 7:00 to 8:20 a.m.**

**WILSHIRE GRAND HOTEL & CENTRE**  
**930 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD**  
**LOS ANGELES, CA 90017**

### **AGENDA**

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- 1. Present an overview of the Task Force composition and responsibilities.***
- 2. Provide a general summary of progress to date of the Task Force and its different workgroups.***
- 3. Summarize technical and regulatory opportunities/constraints pertaining to water recycling in California.***
- 4. Present findings on public perception and acceptance, information, and education programs and ways to ensure public participation in decision-making process regarding recycled water projects.***
- 5. Provide an opportunity to the public to offer their views, ideas, and/or suggestions on the subject matter.***